

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A packet fiber node is described for use in an access network such as, for  
5 example, a cable network. The packet fiber node may differ from convention RF fiber  
nodes deployed in a cable network in that the packet fiber node is configured to  
communicate with the Head End of the network using baseband optical signals rather  
than frequency modulated optical signals. According to a specific embodiment of the  
present invention, one or more packet fiber nodes may be deployed in a cable network  
10 to service a plurality of different subscriber groups which are serviced by a single,  
conventional RF fiber node.